

# APPENDIX F: YOUTH ASSET MODEL

## The Asset Approach

### giving kids what they need to succeed

Why do some kids grow up with ease, while others struggle? Why do some kids get involved in dangerous activities, while others spend their time contributing to society? Why do some youth "beat the odds" in difficult situations, while others get trapped?

Many factors influence why some young people have successes in life and why others have a harder time. Economic circumstances, genetics, trauma, and many other factors play a role. But these factors—which seem difficult, if not impossible, to change—aren't all that matters. Research by Search Institute has identified 40 concrete, positive experiences and qualities—"developmental assets"—that have a tremendous influence on young people's lives. And they are things that people from all walks of life can help to nurture.

Research shows that the 40 developmental assets help young people make wise decisions, choose positive paths, and grow up competent, caring, and responsible. The assets (see page 2) are grouped into eight categories:

- ▶ **Support**—Young people need to experience support, care, and love from their families and many others. They need organizations and institutions that provide positive, supportive environments.
- ▶ **Empowerment**—Young people need to be valued by their community and have opportunities to contribute to others. For this to occur, they must be safe and feel secure.

- ▶ **Boundaries and expectations**—Young people need to know what is expected of them and whether activities and behaviors are "in bounds" or "out of bounds."
- ▶ **Constructive use of time**—Young people need constructive, enriching opportunities for growth through creative activities, youth programs, congregational involvement, and quality time at home.
- ▶ **Commitment to learning**—Young people need to develop a lifelong commitment to education and learning.
- ▶ **Positive values**—Youth need to develop strong values that guide their choices.
- ▶ **Social competencies**—Young people need skills and competencies that equip them to make positive choices, to build relationships, and to succeed in life.
- ▶ **Positive identity**—Young people need a strong sense of their own power, purpose, worth, and promise.

The asset framework is a framework that includes everyone. Families, schools, neighborhoods, congregations, and all organizations, institutions, and individuals in a community can play a role in building assets for youth. This brochure introduces the assets, shows their power and presence in young people's lives, and gives concrete suggestions for what you can do to build assets.



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## 40 Developmental Assets

Search Institute has identified the following building blocks of healthy development that help young people grow up healthy, caring, and responsible.

CATEGORY	ASSET NAME AND DEFINITION
External Assets	<b>Support</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Family support</b>—Family life provides high levels of love and support.</li> <li>2. <b>Positive family communication</b>—Young person and her or his parent(s) communicate positively, and young person is willing to seek advice and counsel from parent(s).</li> <li>3. <b>Other adult relationships</b>—Young person receives support from three or more nonparent adults.</li> <li>4. <b>Caring neighborhood</b>—Young person experiences caring neighbors.</li> <li>5. <b>Caring school climate</b>—School provides a caring, encouraging environment.</li> <li>6. <b>Parent involvement in schooling</b>—Parent(s) are actively involved in helping young person succeed in school.</li> </ol>
	<b>Empowerment</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. <b>Community values youth</b>—Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth.</li> <li>8. <b>Youth as resources</b>—Young people are given useful roles in the community.</li> <li>9. <b>Service to others</b>—Young person serves in the community one hour or more per week.</li> <li>10. <b>Safety</b>—Young person feels safe at home, at school, and in the neighborhood.</li> </ol>
	<b>Boundaries &amp; Expectations</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11. <b>Family boundaries</b>—Family has clear rules and consequences and monitors the young person's whereabouts.</li> <li>12. <b>School boundaries</b>—School provides clear rules and consequences.</li> <li>13. <b>Neighborhood boundaries</b>—Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring young people's behavior.</li> <li>14. <b>Adult role models</b>—Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior.</li> <li>15. <b>Positive peer influence</b>—Young person's best friends model responsible behavior.</li> <li>16. <b>High expectations</b>—Both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well.</li> </ol>
	<b>Constructive Use of Time</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>17. <b>Creative activities</b>—Young person spends three or more hours per week in lessons or practice in music, theater, or other arts.</li> <li>18. <b>Youth programs</b>—Young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs, or organizations at school and/or in the community.</li> <li>19. <b>Religious community</b>—Young person spends one or more hours per week in activities in a religious institution.</li> <li>20. <b>Time at home</b>—Young person is out with friends "with nothing special to do" two or fewer nights per week.</li> </ol>
Internal Assets	<b>Commitment to Learning</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>21. <b>Achievement motivation</b>—Young person is motivated to do well in school.</li> <li>22. <b>School engagement</b>—Young person is actively engaged in learning.</li> <li>23. <b>Homework</b>—Young person reports doing at least one hour of homework every school day.</li> <li>24. <b>Bonding to school</b>—Young person cares about her or his school.</li> <li>25. <b>Reading for pleasure</b>—Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week.</li> </ol>
	<b>Positive Values</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>26. <b>Caring</b>—Young person places high value on helping other people.</li> <li>27. <b>Equality and social justice</b>—Young person places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty.</li> <li>28. <b>Integrity</b>—Young person acts on convictions and stands up for her or his beliefs.</li> <li>29. <b>Honesty</b>—Young person "tells the truth even when it is not easy."</li> <li>30. <b>Responsibility</b>—Young person accepts and takes personal responsibility.</li> <li>31. <b>Restraint</b>—Young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs.</li> </ol>
	<b>Social Competencies</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>32. <b>Planning and decision making</b>—Young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices.</li> <li>33. <b>Interpersonal competence</b>—Young person has empathy, sensitivity, and friendship skills.</li> <li>34. <b>Cultural competence</b>—Young person has knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds.</li> <li>35. <b>Resistance skills</b>—Young person can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations.</li> <li>36. <b>Peaceful conflict resolution</b>—Young person seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently.</li> </ol>
	<b>Positive Identity</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>37. <b>Personal power</b>—Young person feels he or she has control over "things that happen to me."</li> <li>38. <b>Self-esteem</b>—Young person reports having a high self-esteem.</li> <li>39. <b>Sense of purpose</b>—Young person reports that "my life has a purpose."</li> <li>40. <b>Positive view of personal future</b>—Young person is optimistic about her or his personal future.</li> </ol>

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